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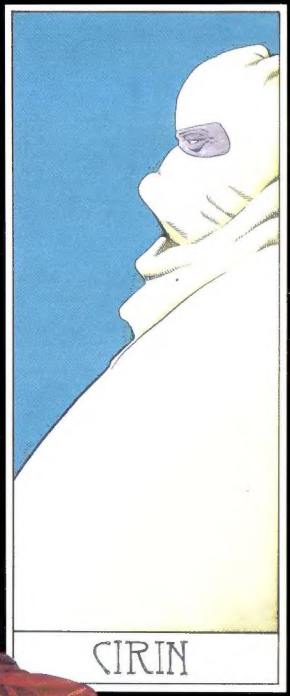
CEREBUS
mothers & daughters
23



173
AUG

NOTE • FROM • THE PRESIDENT

I had really forgotten how exhausting the Big Cons can be. Just got back from *Comicon* in Chicago and I wanted to write this while a few things were still fresh in my mind relative to self-publishing.

★★★★★★★★★★

I would have to say the biggest self-publishing success story at *Comicon* was Martin Wagner. Martin is one ballsy guy, let me tell you. I had made a general suggestion some time ago that an artist-writer who is interested in self-publishing should consider finding a certain number of stores who are willing to invest in him; finding stores who will pay in advance for a book before it goes to press in order to have enough 'up front' money for a printing bill. Well, Martin gave it a try. And he managed to round up eighty (count 'em, EIGHTY) stores willing to send him a cheque for seventy-five dollars for ten trade paperbacks and two hardcovers (the numbers might be wrong, but I think it was ten and two) of the *Collegiate Hepcats* which reprints all the *Hepcats* strips he did for the *Daily Texan* as well as *Hepcats* 1 under a new painted cover. It worked! It really, really worked. He brought a few boxes of them with him to the convention and he sold every last damn one of them. He'll probably need to do a second printing before the end of the year. Now, making all those phone calls was undoubtedly a pain in the ass, but Martin didn't get discouraged and what do you know? It worked! I'd like to thank every one of those stores for such a tremendous show of confidence in *Collegiate Hepcats*. That book would not exist without your support; and in this case it isn't hyperbole; it's a fact. Eighty retailers made a self-published trade paperback exist.

★★★★★★★★★★

The next biggest self-publishing success story at *Comicon* was the tidal wave of ash-cans and mini-comics that were circulating. I came home with a stack several inches thick of ash-cans, mini-comics and first issues. I'd like to thank all of the folks in Artists' Alley who gave me a copy as well as everyone who brought copies of their mini's and ashcans to me during the autograph sessions. I had such a whale of a time reading them all (*Collegiate Hepcats* alone took about three hours) from cover to cover that I didn't even get around to reading the mainstream books until I got back.

★★★★★★★★★★

The one hour talk I gave on Saturday was very well-attended (thanks to everyone who braved the July heat). One question in particular, I made a mental note to cover in this column. Someone asked about working for the mainstream companies; something along the lines of 'what if you have a really good *Batman* story or *X-Force* story you want to do.' I pointed out that *1963* is the answer to that. Everyone knows who the characters are supposed to be. Just change the way they look and the name. It dates back to *Watchmen*, actually. As soon as a DC executive told Alan Moore to change the original Charlton characters into new characters (DC already had plans for the Fly, Blue Beetle, etc.) and as soon as DC trademarked and copyrighted those new characters; well, hey, that's checkmate on the big board. If you change the way the character looks and his name, you've created a new character. So if that's what's holding you back from self-publishing, just pick a character you've always wanted to do, call him something else, change a few things about his appearance and away you go. And you don't have to worry about some editor with a stick up his or her ass making you conform to company policy. You can do the story exactly the way you want it done. Isn't that great? Well, I think it is.

★★★★★★★★★★

Steve Bissette had a few pages of *Tyrant* with him which he'll be self-publishing later this year. His best work ever. As I said to Larry Marder 'Who would've guessed that the loosest, sloppiest inker in the business had Al Williamson hiding somewhere inside him?'

★★★★★★★★★★

Okay. Next issue, I'll get back to guidelines on self-publishing (Martin made an excellent point that deserves a few paragraphs), but this time out, I just felt like, y'know, celebrating a bit.

CEREBUS

NO. 173 AUGUST 1993

DAVE SIM
President

GERHARD
Vice-President

LINDA BERZINS
Typesetting

MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS
a novel

•

BOOK ONE
(Cerebus 151 to Cerebus 162)
Flight

•

BOOK TWO
(Cerebus 163 to Cerebus 174)
Women

•

BOOK THREE
(Cerebus 175 to Cerebus 188)

•

BOOK FOUR
(Cerebus 189 to Cerebus 200)

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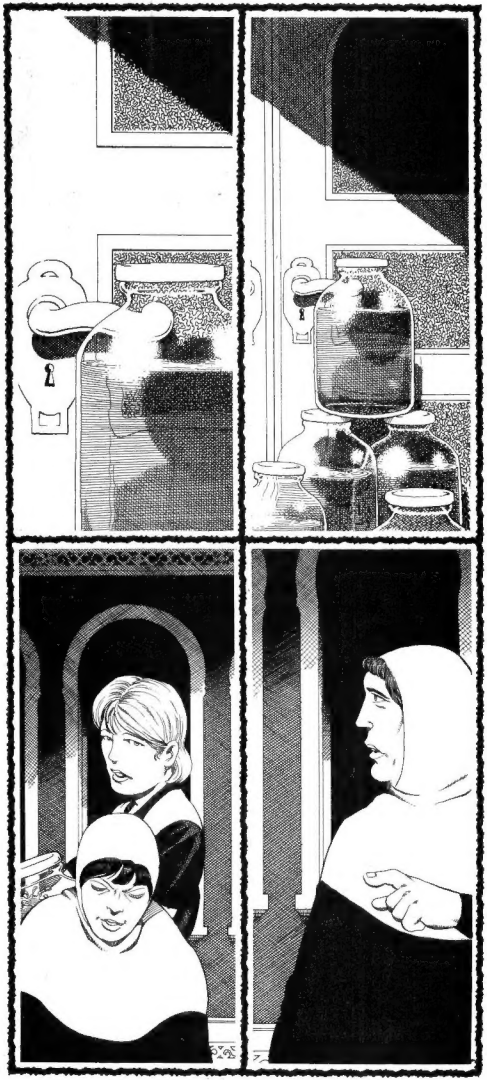
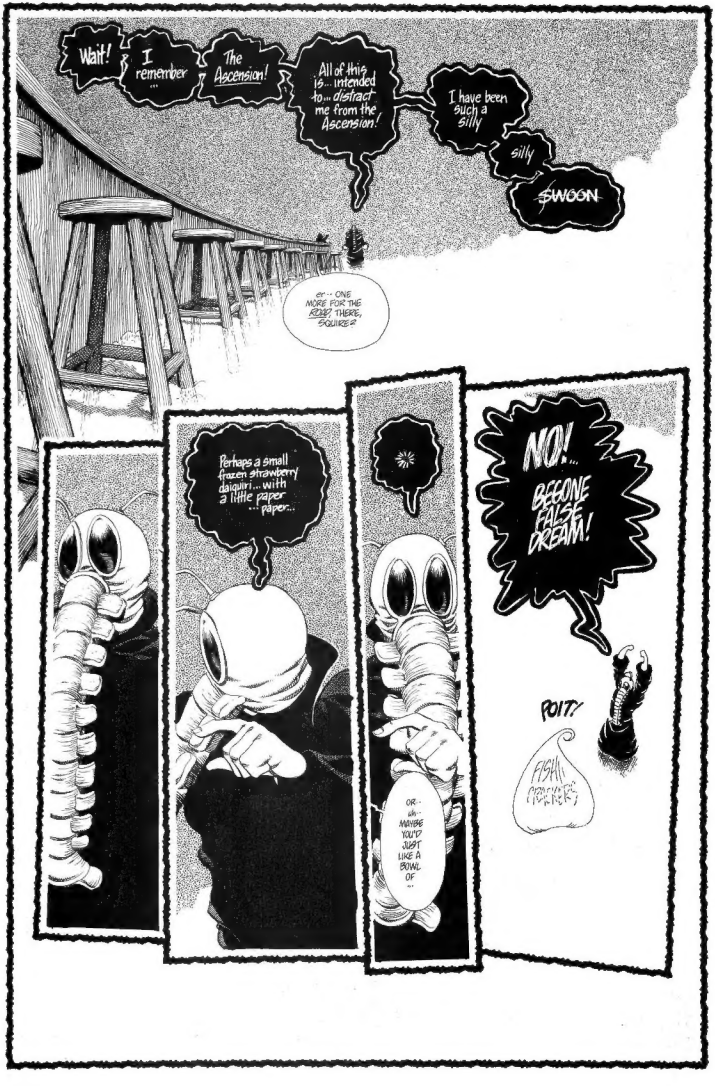
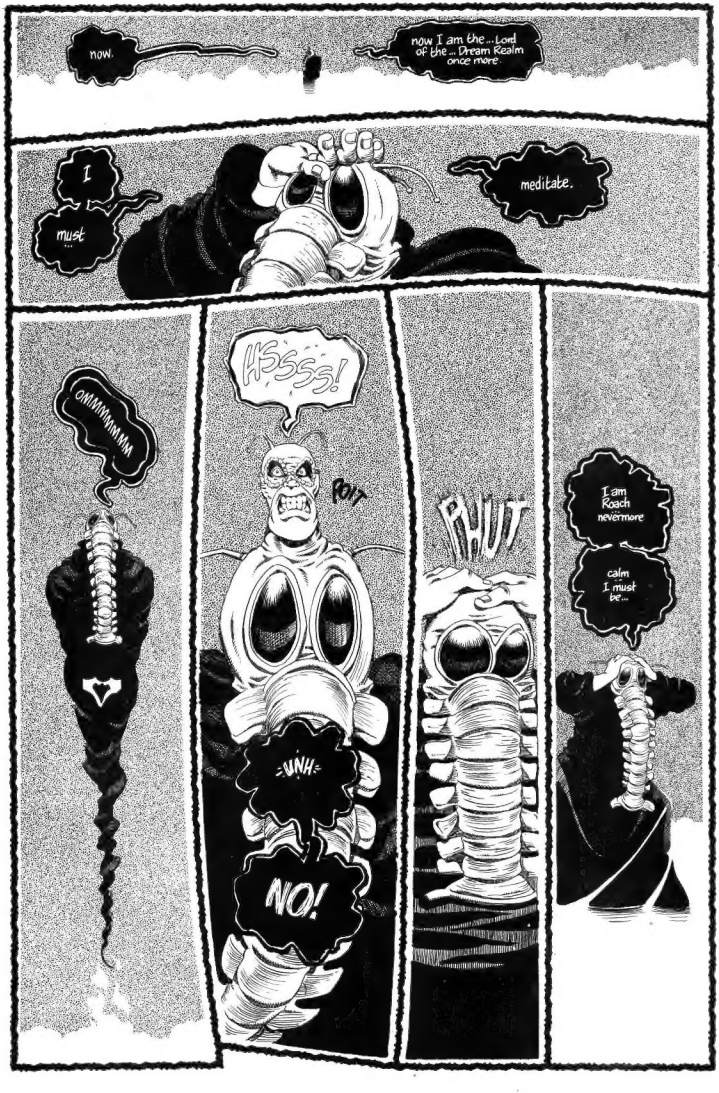
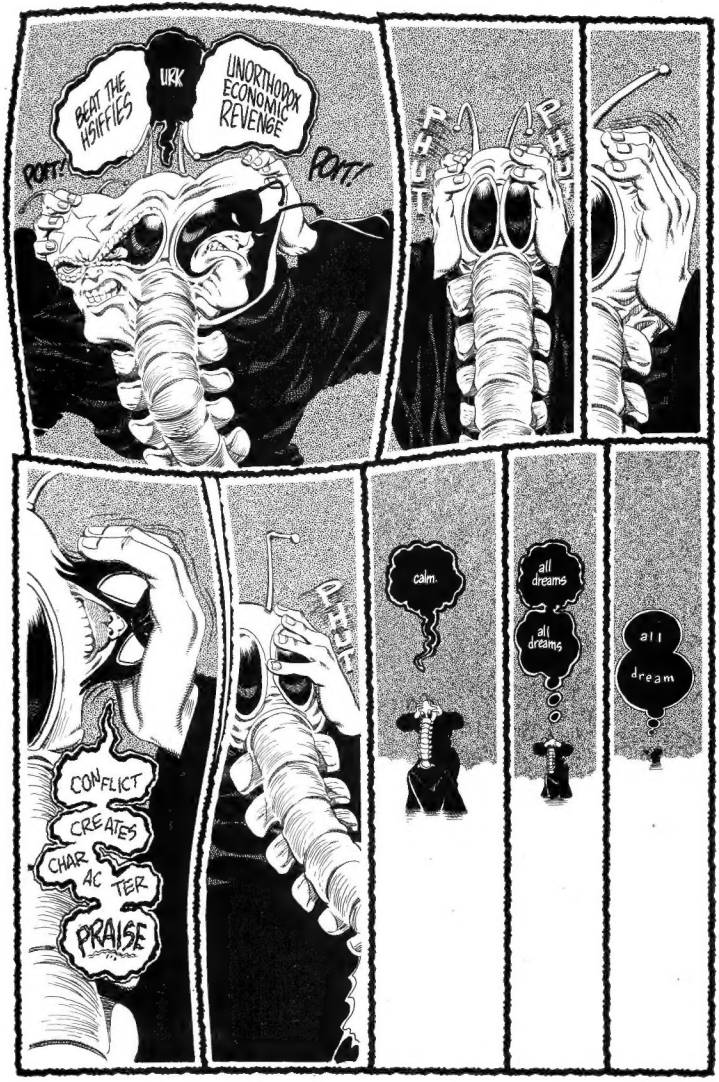


TIME PASSED like wet sand through an hour-glass. She had to keep them all busy; their attentions focussed on minutiae. If they stopped working, they would start thinking and if they started thinking they would realize that she intended a mass suicide by fire. She moved swiftly from place to place; praising the mindless enterprise of the blindly obedient; discussing impossible strategies with the intelligent and the insightful. Their complete lack of military background was her greatest asset. Astoria knew that Cirin's troops surrounded them and would strike at every entrance simultaneously. It was, however, an easy matter to persuade her 'defenders' that the attack would center on a single entrance and that they had only to set a fire there and they would be able to escape under cover of flames, smoke and confusion. Whenever one of them would grow quiet and contemplative, she would hug them to her with her good arm and say firmly, 'the Goddess is with us'. As the sun began its descent toward the horizon she instructed the most obedient to begin preparing a large meal and to clean and scrub the main foyer. She raced back and forth from entrance to entrance. 'The Goddess is with us', 'the Goddess is with us'.

It wouldn't be long, now.


Wait!
I remember ...
The Ascension!
...All of this is... intended to... distract me from the Ascension!
I have been such a silly
silly
SWOON
...or... ONE MORE FOR THE ROAD, THERE, SQUIRE?
Perhaps a small frozen strawberry daiquiri... with a little paper... paper...
...or... uh... MAYBE YOU'D JUST LIKE A BOWL OF...
NO!... BEGONE FALSE DREAM!
POIT!
FISH CRACKERS


now.
now I am the... Lord of the... Dream Realm once more.
I must
meditate.
OMMMMMMMM
HSSSS!
POW
UNH
NO!
PHUT
I am Roach nevermore
calm... I must be...


BEAT THE HSIFFIES
URK
UNORTHODOX ECONOMIC REVENGE
POW!
POW!
PHUT!
PHUT!
CONFLICT CREATES CHAR AC TER
PRAISE
PHUT!
calm.
all dreams
all dreams
all dream

CEREBUS HAD BEEN wide awake for some time. He felt no ill effects from his drunken binge. He heard the voice of Magus Doran; their final conversation over two decades before.

'You have been my least successful pupil and yet I am as certain today as I was the day you came here that Tarim has chosen you as his champion. When the time is right you will hear these words again. The priestesses and the queens seek to steal the magic and make it their own. Throughout history they have controlled, manipulated, contained and infected pure male magic. It is not theirs. It is ours! They are the soil in which the plant grows but they are not the plant itself. Left unchecked they will take over the churches, the armies, businesses and government. They won't stop until their malignancy; their poison has infected every corner of human society. They're mad. Every one of them. Follow insanity back to its source and you'll find a woman every time. When you hear these words again, there will be a throne that is rightfully yours and which you have lost through the poisonous interference of womankind. Take it back. You will have with you a symbol, a small token of female poison which will represent a dead memory and which has kept you weak. Put it aside.

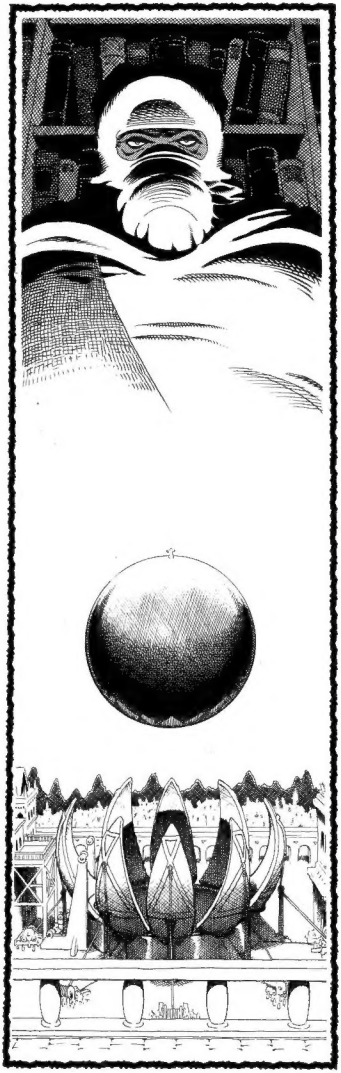
You must be strong to redeem all the men who are weak. Tarim will guide you and assist you. But it is your strength alone which will turn the tide. You must save our magic in the name of the Living Tarim. It can live for the first time, free and unfettered if you are strong. Cast out the female poisons that have kept us oppressed and bound throughout all of human history.

Here's the bird that never flew.
Here's the tree that never grew.
Here's the bell that never rang.
Here's the fish that never swam.

It is the legend of Ketigern, the mage patron of the city of your father's birth.

Redeem us, young Cerebus.

'Redeem us.'



General Cho: All of our troops in the Lower City, Great Cirin. We're . . . there are a few exceptions but we are receiving nothing but discordant imagery, fantasies. We're . . .

Cirin: What are you saying?

General Cho: They're all asleep, Great Cirin. They're dreaming.

Cirin: What about Swoon Country? What about Cerebus?

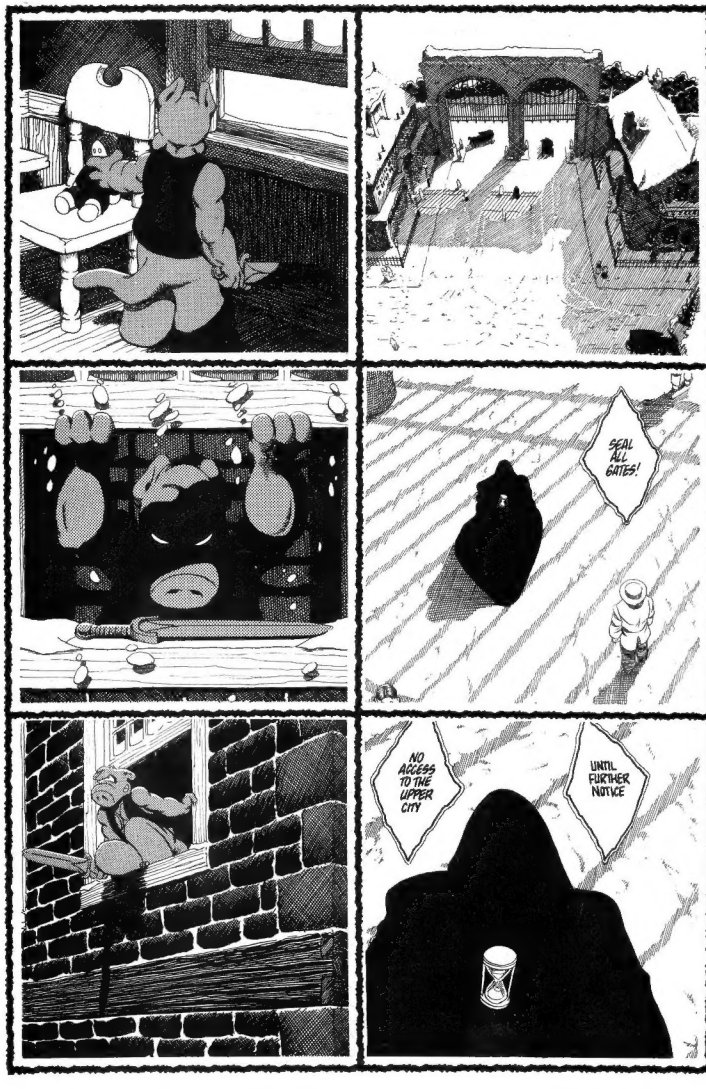
General Cho: Great Cirin, we don't know. Our people are asleep. I've just . . .

Cirin: Why wasn't I informed of this? Damn your eyes, I said . . .

General Cho: Great Cirin it just happened. Just this minute. I told you immediately; as soon as I was certain.

Cirin: All right. All right. Seal the Upper City. The gold is being poured right now. Whoever is behind this they're too late. We've won. Give the order.

General Cho: Yes, Great Cirin.


SEAL ALL GATES!
NO ACCESS TO THE UPPER CITY
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

AND THEN ASTORIA had a vision. There she was in the park near her parents' home. She was dressed for church, but as had been her habit she had gone to the park to fantasize about her *own* church that she would build one day; a courtyard open to the skies with wild flowers growing all around. In place of an altar there would be an ornate bowl filled with exotic seeds and berries to attract beautiful and rare birds. People would talk to each other instead of listening to the droning voice of a tedious old . . .

A man had approached her. Even at that age (nine? ten?) she had had no fear of men. As he sat down beside her she had fixed him with a direct and level gaze. Without preamble he had handed her a small book with a single name; 'Kevil' engraved on its binding. 'Here' he had said. Without a word of acknowledgement she had flipped to the first page and had begun to read. An inner peace descended over her as the words appeared before her again.

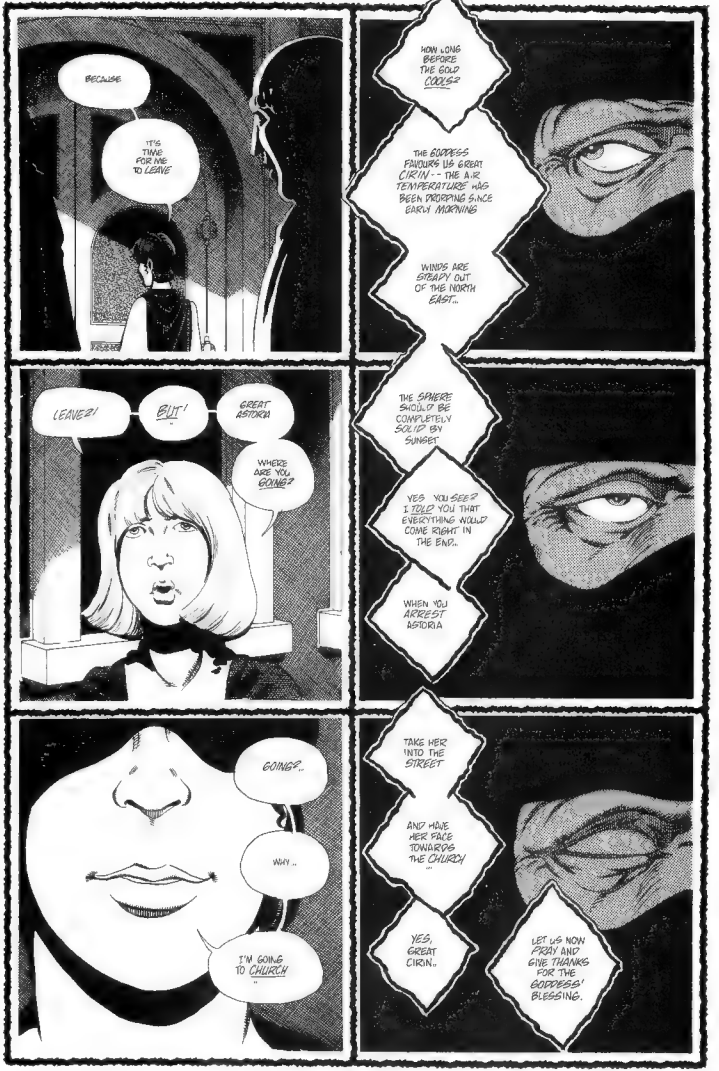
"Wither shall we go? Shall we debate
in valley or on peak?
Where shall we dwell? In what nobler
land than the isle of sunset?
Where else shall we walk in peace
to and fro, on fertile ground?
Who but I can take you to where
the stream runs, or falls,
clearest?"

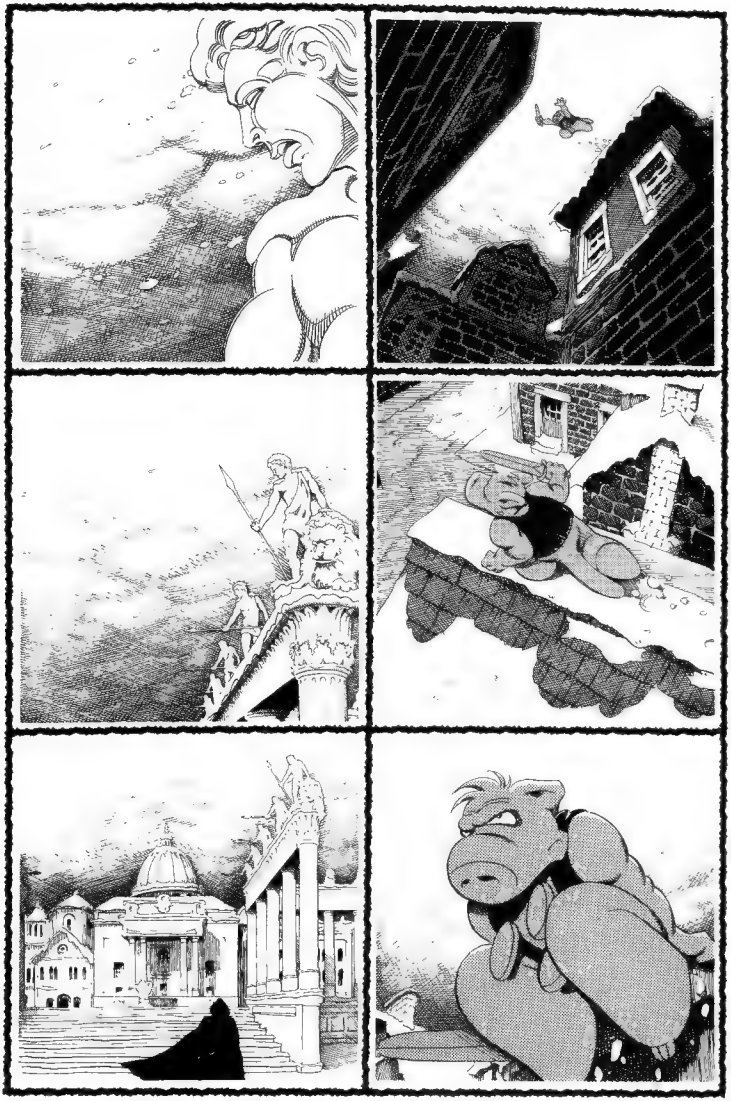
She had reread the passage several times; each word had seemed so sweet, so sublime, so perfect and pure.

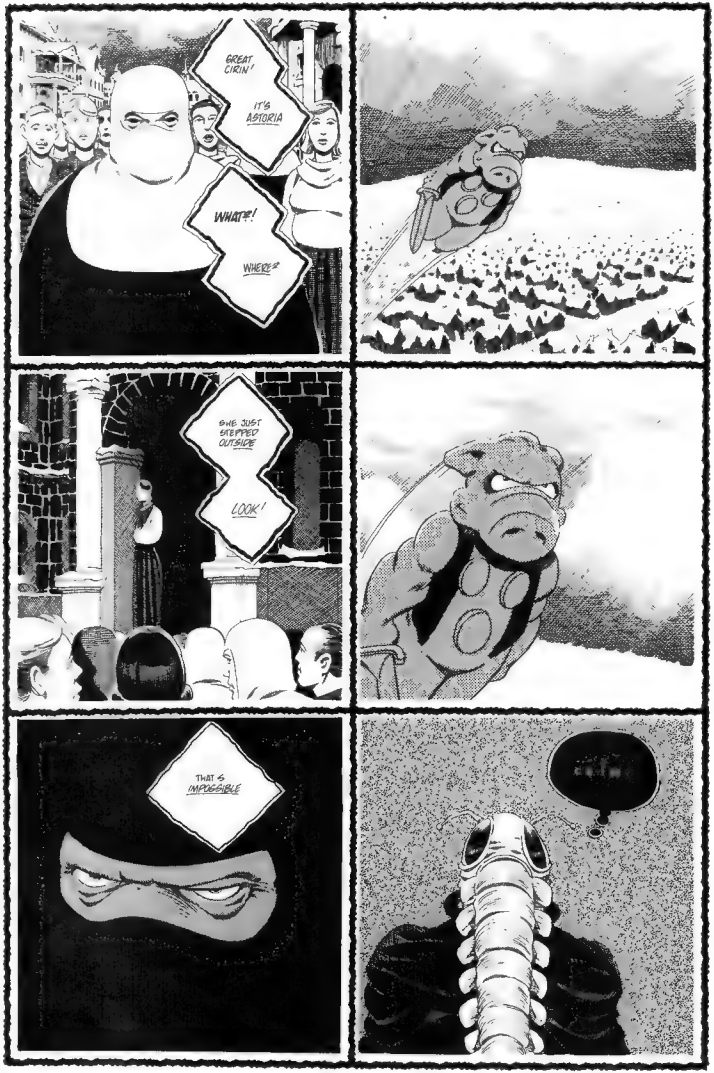
'How much do you want for it,' she had asked, hoping the price would be less than the three copper bits tucked inside her white cotton glove; money which her mother had intended for the church collection plate. But even as she looked up, her little face solemn and determined, the man was gone. Without bothering to look around for him, she began reading. She hadn't looked up again until she had difficulty distinguishing the printed words in front of her. She realized, then, that the sun had already set and night was fast approaching.

Hiding the book in her underwear, she had hurried home.

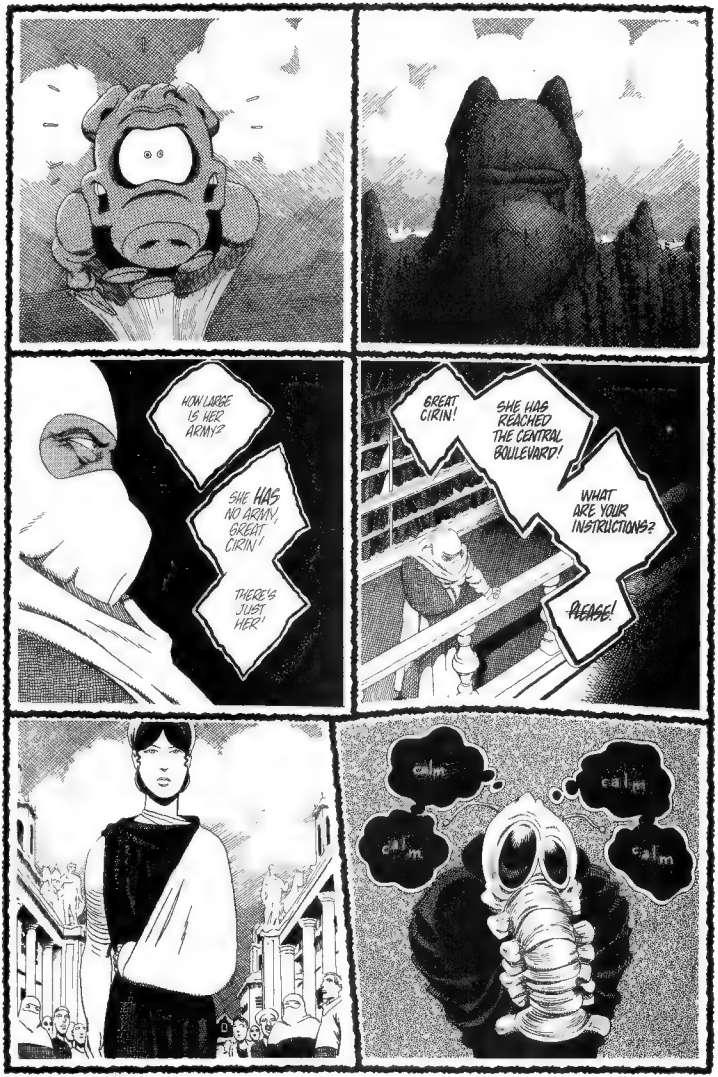
SHALL WE DEBATE IN VALLEY
OR ON PEAK?
I'M SORRY GREAT AGTOKIA
DID YOU SAY SOMETHING?
I WONDER IF A COUPLE OF YOU WOULD MIND MOVING THOSE GLASS CONTAINERS
AWAY FROM THE FRONT DOOR
MOVE THEM AWAY?
OH CERTAINLY
BUT
WHY?


BECAUSE
IT'S TIME FOR ME TO LEAVE
HOW LONG BEFORE THE GOLD COOLS?
THE GODDESS FAVOURS US GREAT CIRIN -- THE AIR TEMPERATURE HAS BEEN DROPPING SINCE EARLY MORNING
WINDS ARE STEADY OUT OF THE NORTH EAST..
LEAVE?!
BUT!
GREAT ASTORIA
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
THE SPHERE SHOULD BE COMPLETELY SOLID BY SUNSET
YES YOU SEE? I TOLD YOU THAT EVERYTHING WOULD COME RIGHT IN THE END..
WHEN YOU ARREST ASTORIA
GOING?..
WHY..
I'M GOING TO CHURCH
TAKE HER INTO THE STREET
AND MOVE HER FACE TOWARDS THE CHURCH
YES, GREAT CIRIN..
LET US NOW PRAY AND GIVE THANKS FOR THE GODDESS' BLESSING.

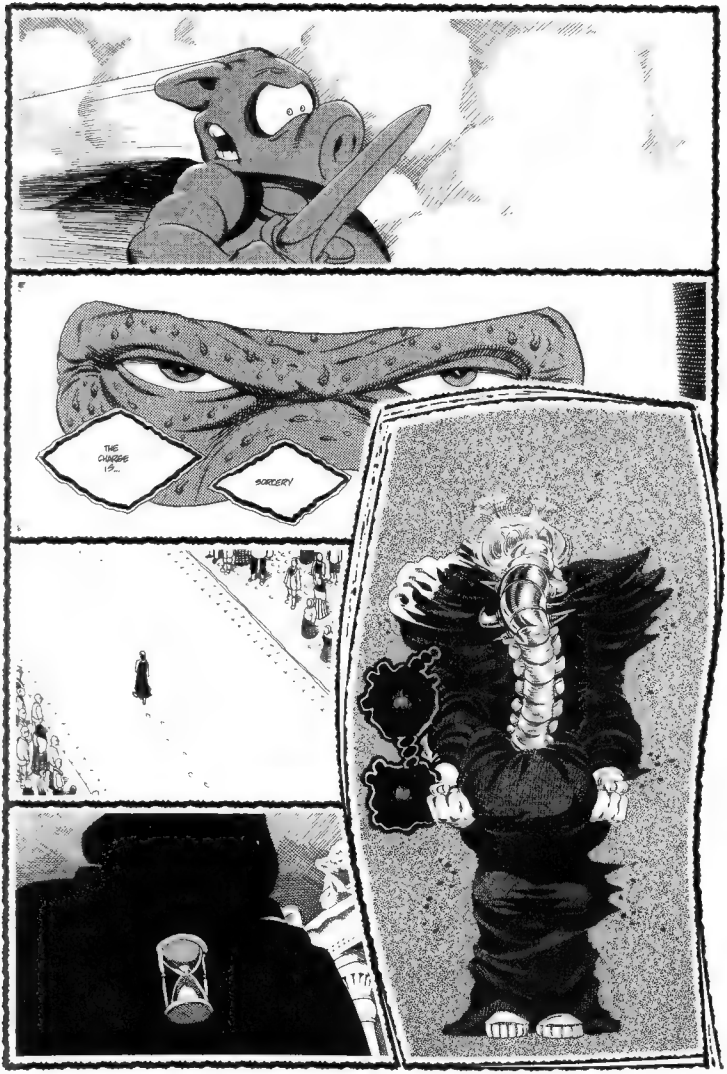


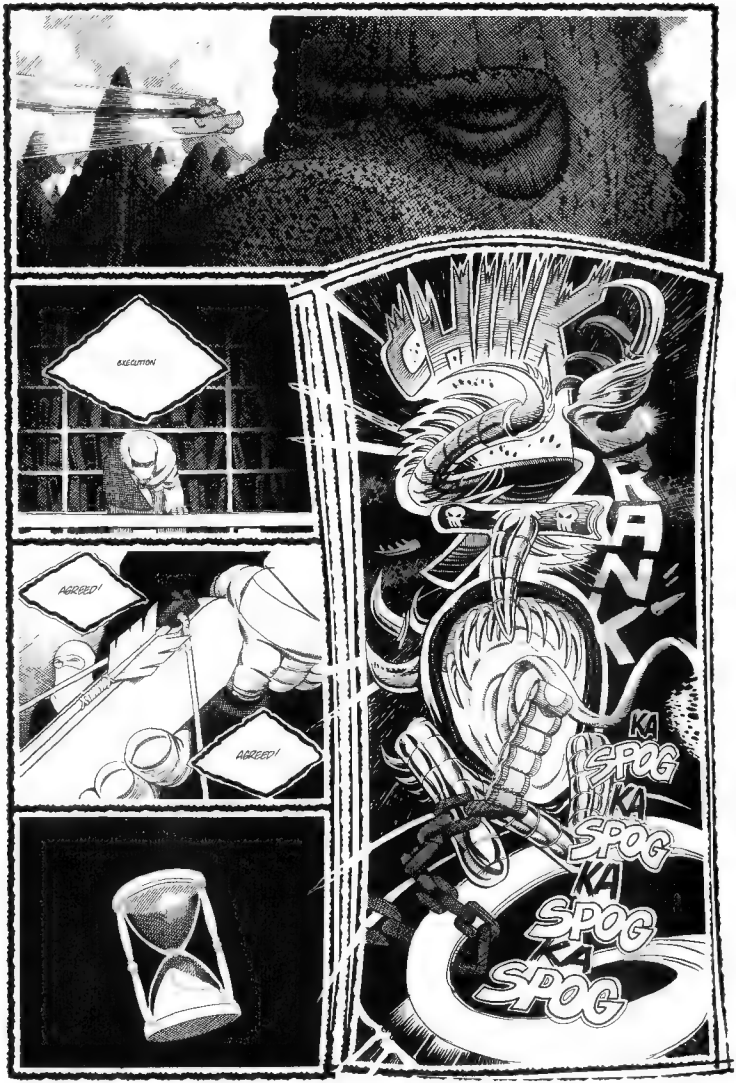

GREAT CIRIN!
IT'S ASTORIA
WHAT?!
WHERE?
SHE JUST STEPPED OUTSIDE
LOOK!
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE

GREAT CIRIN!
SHE'S MOVING AWAY FROM THE HOTEL
WHAT ARE YOUR ORDERS?
AVENGER HERE
YES, GREAT CHIEN
ON WHAT CHARGE?
UNH!


HOW LARGE IS HER ARMY?
SHE HAS NO ARMY, GREAT CIRIN!
THERE'S JUST HER!
GREAT CIRIN!
SHE HAS REACHED THE CENTRAL BOULEVARD!
WHAT ARE YOUR INSTRUCTIONS?
PLEASE!
calm
calm
calm
calm

ARREST HER AND EVERYONE FOLLOWING HER FOR:-- UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLY!
GREAT CIRIN! NO ONE IS FOLLOWING HER
WE'RE ALL JUST-- JUST.. WATCHING HER
CALM CALM CALM CALM


THE CHARGE IS...
SORCERY


EXECUTION
AGREED!
AGREED!
CLINK
KA
SPOG
KA
SPOG
KA
SPOG
KA
SPOG

MOORE-GAIMAN SIMROACH™
PIE CUT ROACH™
STATIC ROACH™
KAREN BERGER MYSTERY THEATER ROACH™
TOTAL SELL-THROUGH ROACH™
GRENDEL CROSS-OVER ROACH™
DEFIANT ROACH™
TRUE CRIME CARPS CATCH™
KNIGHTFALL ROACH™
HARDWARE ROACH™
VALIANT ROACH™
DEATHMATE ROACH™
HARDCASE ROACH™
VOID ROACH™
VOIDOID ROACH™
FOIL ROACH™
BANE ROACH™
PLASMROACH™ WILL NEVER BE GOREROACH™ FOR YOUR ORGROACH™
PLASM ROACH 2099™
COLOUR GEORGE REEVES ROACH™
TUROK ROACH™
PITT ROACHH™
SKYBOX ROACH™
ICON ROACH™
CARD SCUM ROACH™
MAXX ROACHH™
COMICS' GREATEST ROACH (JUST SIGN HERE)™
MAXIMUM CARNAGE ROACH™
PRIME ROACH™
MILESTONE ROACH NOBODY KNOWS 'TIL I FIND MY TRADEMARK
TOPPS ROACH™
FULLY-RETURNABLE ROACH™
LIEFIELD NOUN ROACH™
BIG HOOTERS ROACH™

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Dave and Gerhard,

I just received my copy of *Flight* a few days ago, and I was ecstatic! I couldn't believe it . . . I gushed . . . 154 out of 5000. O.K., so I'm easily amused, but I couldn't believe that somehow I ended up with such a low number! I mean, I thought I called too late, and there wouldn't be any left, but maybe not everyone likes to read *Cerebus* as much as I do.

My wife is happy with this one as well, because she wanted to know what happened at the end of *Melmoth*, and now she'll find out. Polly doesn't have the patience to read month after month to find out what's going on so she reads the big books when they come out. Last year, when we were separated for a brief time I ordered *Jaka's Story* and *Melmoth*. Polly was pregnant, and had to go back to Arkansas to be with an obstetrician, while I took extra classes and was late. We were supposed to have the baby and all in Ohio, but a parishioner got wind that our church was going to get a $500,000 endowment, and said that we would have to take a pay cut to stay. Yeah right! We were earning $15,000—they had hired the two of us, me as minister and Polly as director of Christian Education/ youth worker—and we were looking at bankruptcy once Sophia Jane was born. So we were separated for a while, but I sent Polly both of your books in that desperate and lonely time and she read them. In a time where so much separated us for a brief time your books bridged that gap. This letter is also a belated "thank you" for your part in helping us in that time. It's funny how a good story can take us out of ourselves for a moment, and later bring us back to where we were, with the end result being that we are a little less stressed out.

I'm anxiously waiting to get #169 at my local comic store, I've been waiting forever for a new issue. Like I said, Polly has no patience for serial literature, while I'm just your average anal-retentive comic reader. So thank you for your time, and for your creativity in *Cerebus*, and *Spawn* as well.

Sincerely,

Scott Shafer
P.O. Box 305
Cave City, AR
USA 72521

All I can say, Reverend, is you must be one *very* broad-minded man-of-the-cloth.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

What exactly are you up to? Something strange is going on with the covers of *Cerebus* and I want to know exactly what you're up to! Let me explain. (Here come the Aardvark Comment cliches . . .)

This is my first letter to you even though I'm a long time reader. Been reading since # . . . oh jeez, what number was it . . . it was the pink cover . . . wait a minute . . . (runs to his collection) . . . #42, that's it! Since then I've never stopped reading *Cerebus* and I never will! Just keep ignoring the asswipes who think they know how you should be writing your life's work! (you have just experienced the traditional "Please print my letter" grovel, however, all of it was sincere). Now, for quite some time I've notice a strange phenomenon involving *Cerebus* covers and I think the world deserves an explanation.

There is a weird reaction between the covers of *Cerebus* and the comic bags I store them in. Whoa! Calm down, fan boys, I'm not talking deterioration or anything! It's just that the comic bag retains the impression of the cover art even after I remove the comic from the bag! It's sort of like a Shroud of Turin deal. Hey, I'm totally serious about this! It's true! And it happens mainly on those covers with totally black backgrounds.

I'm looking at the cover of #169 (*Mothers & Daughters* 19). Jaka is seated reading a book and it is totally black all around her. The Cerebus logo is all in white. Now, I remove the comic from the bag and the impression of the lighter figures can still be seen on the comic bag! The Cerebus logo can be clearly read! Even those thin light circles around the candle flames are easily made out. Wherever there is black on the cover the comic bag remains unchanged but the lighter, whiter figures "sink" down to make a clear impression in the plastic. Other comix with similar covers do not do this; only *Cerebus*. I'm spooked! It's almost a religious experience!

Now Dave, is this some kind of mind control to make us buy *Cerebus*? Did you put "certain substances" in the ink to get us addicted? Is it Most Holy's mystical power manifesting itself? Are you toying with the idea of making every other issue a "foil-embossed die-cut prism-hologram pop-up cover with a limited edition Cerebus decoder whistle and blow-pop"? Or is it a non-issue involving printing techniques to give me a subject for my first letter to you? We may never know.

Hey, at least I didn't bite off anybody's clitoris! No wonder everyone's girlfriend is always dumping him in this letter column!

(With you till 300, whatever you do to the covers)

Rickster Rick Locuson
8 Baron Avenue
Marlton, NJ
USA 08053

P.S. Hey wait! Technically I've been with you since you did "The Beavers" in "Quack". I guess that doesn't count though, huh?

Ix-nay on the itoris-clay omments-cay. Cott-say afer-shay is ust-jay ove-shay ou-yay.

★★★★★★★★★★

Yo there.

Well, *Spawn* #10 has come and gone (as have a handful of *Cerebus* issues since my last letter) and I'm wondering if it was really worth all the furrowed brows (including mine; it wasn't). It proved to be what you, Dave, had probably suspected all along: an above-average comic book story. There's

nothing wrong with that of course. In fact, it seems increasingly rare in these days of how-many-gimmicks-can-we-squeeze-on-the-cover covers Yes Dave, my fiercely reactionary look of panic upon reading of your plan to guest on *Spawn* was replaced with a smile after finishing the story and relief that "Dave Sim Does Image" didn't cause the poles to shift after all. The seas didn't run red with blood. The East Coast wasn't ravaged by a horde of locusts. And you knew it all the time didn't you, you sneaky bastard? Boy, do I feel foolish!

So what's left of Dave #2 (or is that Dave #1? I forget . . .)?

What's left is *Campaign '93*

I don't know why I had no furrowed brow over what could be argued as a most blatantly commercial move, but I didn't, and I'm glad you're doing it.

I'm tired of being embittered when something I love, that is known only to me and a precious few, "explodes" into the pop culture consciousness of the mainstream. Shit. I went through this with *R.E.M.* Here I am listening to *Fables of the Reconstruction* by myself; next thing I know Stipe is entertaining the masses on *MTV's Inaugural Ball*, fer chrissakes. It didn't piss me off as much as it could have. I had already been pissed for seeing them lip-synching in videos and doing *Arsenio.* And I was just too damn tired to do it anymore.

You, Dave, are the lucky recipient of this new tolerance and awareness. Sure I may occasionally possess a furrowed brow or two, but I now realize that "selling out" isn't always "selling out" and even when it is, it isn't necessarily a bad thing. All this extra stuff (the Arseni-oops, I mean the buttons and #0s) doesn't take away from my enjoyment of the original creation. It's still there in its original form (uh, obscure and unpopular). So no harm there.

And the fact that the "extra stuff" exists only to increase your audience? Fine with me. If *R.E.M.'s* "Shiny Happy People" interests one teenybopper enough so that he/she picks up *Reckoning*, then isn't that good? Likewise, if a purchase of *Cerebus* #0 results in a purchase of a phone book or three, then what could be wrong with that? Nope, no harm there either.

Perhaps I'm too much the Davehead, but seeing you make commerce-oriented moves in an overt attempt to increase the awareness of Cerebus's existence (and thus an increase in audience and income) just doesn't burn me. I love the book, I want as many people out there to buy it as possible, and I want the creator of the work to be a very happy and fulfilled man, and if he desires, to be downright wealthy.

Where is the harm?

As far as I'm concerned, if more people are picking up the latest issues then they're just in time; the current storyline is tremendous, the covers are exquisite, and the change of direction in the Note is welcome. As for Daves #1 and #2, their psyches and their motivations, I'll leave discourses on those subjects to others. I care not how any facet of *Campaign '93* is viewed. The play, and not the playbill, is the thing.

Best,

Michael Dobosz
119 Old State St.
Buckland, MA
USA 01338

Thanks for the vote of confidence. I appreciate it.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dear Dave,

woh . . . strange to be typing those two words

Anyway — just thought you'd be tickled to see your name in the UK's "Premier music paper". Brightened up my whole day. Love *Cerebus* and am trying to get people into it . . . keep at it. Are you still off the dope? Some oil has turned up here so it's all hands to the spliffs. 's great.

God . . . I didn't realise how little I have to say until I started this. Well fuggit, I have to get back to my underpaid overworked life as a wannabee Rawk Mogul.

Once again thanks for *Cerebus.* (I was trying to think of a suitable compliment — all that occurs is that it's one of the oh, dozen or so literary artifacts that have genuinely inspired me — as in the "FUCK! Can you DO THAT? . . . and it WORKS??? no SHIT!" sense, y'know what I mean?)

Anyway. Enough of my bullshit. Later, later.

Andy Simmons,
Chrysalis Music
13, Bramley Road,
London
W10 6SP UK

It just occured to me — you might print this. In which case could I mention that any interesting and original bands wanting to get their demo listened to are guaranteed that at least, from me, at the above address. Ta, la.

Yes, cannabis just sort of disappeared from my life two or three years ago, except for the occasional joint (or 'spliff' when I'm 'Over 'ome'). Maybe alcohol and cigarettes will do the same some day.

Those bands interested should contact Andy; but please read the 'Address to Pro Con' in 170 before you sign anything.

★★★★★★★★★★

Dave,

Wassup? I'm a graduate of the School of Visual Arts here in New York. I never write to comic books because I think it's kinda corny but *Cerebus* is respectable. I've admired your books for years now and I've always wondered how come there aren't any black people in your books?

You see I'm a young black male and it's just something I wondered about for a while. Understand I have no hostile emotions towards you because I think your work is honest and complicated and works from it's own logic and reality

I've thought of a lot of reasons why you never see black folks among all these other strange people:

1. You're racist.
2. There were no black people in Iest.
3. You write and draw what you know.
4. I've missed something. Must've blinked.
5. We're not part of your market (although there are quite a number of us who check out *Cerebus*).

Please answer these questions. I have my own comic in the works and people ask me all the time "This is excellent but where are the white people?"

Curious about your response.

Kip Omolade

Hey, if you come up with a great white character, throw him or her in. The great thing about creative freedom is doing exactly what you want to do. I haven't done a black character, an Inuit character or a handicapped character but that doesn't mean that I won't. Remember, you're a writer; not a government bureaucrat.

Dear Dave,

I know exactly how you will end *Cerebus* by issue 300. Cerebus will buy a bar and hire Jaka as a waitress. Then Jaka will constantly mock Cerebus for being less intelligent than she and finally leave the bar to finish her novel. Either that or Cerebus is the waitress with eight kids.

Genius is SO *easy*.

Sincerely,

Michael Leung, CEP
Eat Shirts & Die
33 E Wintergreen Ave.
Edison, NJ
USA 08820

Well, thanks a lot. Now I have no surprises left for the last hundred issues.

★★★★★★★★★★

Hi Dave, Hi Ger:

I tried out my theories on a number of people before I got the bright idea of asking you myself. I think I've been able to understand your opinion on the Image debate (things like the Pro Con speech help), but let me see if I've got this straight. You can tell me where I've gone off the track.

It seems to me that you're backing up the Image boys for a very good reason. Your position is this: Rob and Todd, etc., are in a position of being able to tell the stories they want to tell, to the audiences they want to reach and keep the money they make from doing so. This is called creative freedom and you're all for it. You've been a voice crying in the wilderness about it for years. You're not necessarily saying that the Image kids are doing great work and are amazingly talented (in fact, I would doubt that you believe that at all). But you like the Image kids (especially Todd, who by all accounts is a nice, if foul-mouthed, guy), and you believe in the principle of what they are doing. What Rob Liefeld and his Hole in the Wall Gang have done is eliminate editors. They've eliminated bookkeepers. In short, they've eliminated the people who tell them no. And you see where this all is going. If the Image boys are successful, and are able to set an example for other young creators, then eventually we wind up with a marketplace where creators are free to tell their stories, unencumbered by corporate concerns. You have every reason to be excited about all this. In a very real way, you're Todd McFarlane's godfather. The seeds you and Wendy Pini and Jack Katz planted in the late Seventies have turned into a late-blooming forest.

Some people (who work in the critical press) are having a very hard time seeing that forest for the trees. Instead of seeing a blossoming marketplace of new ideas, they're seeing another company churning out hyperviolent shit that kids are double-bagging at warp speed. They see young creators using their freedom to flood the stands with regurgitated, accentuated crap. And they're right (in my opinion, at least). I think even you would agree with them on that. These critics are guys and gals who have spent their professional lives arguing for quality in the marketplace and against the lowest common denominator. And that's an uphill battle not only in comics but in any art form.

In any case, you now think that to get to the kind of market you envision, it's not so bad to go through this Image step as long as the results are positive. I think you would rather see people like David Mazzucchelli, Steve Bissette and Martin Wagner be acknowledged as the trailblazers, but you'll take what you can get. After all, David and Steve and Martin will benefit as well, right? Image's critics don't see it that way: To them, Todd's and Rob's work just exemplifies what's wrong with comics. But what those critics don't understand is that kids want to read *Spawn.* And *Wolverine.* And *Punisher.* And there's really nothing wrong with that. Those critics aren't thinking long-term, and you are, I think.

That's my take on your take. Am I close? Whatever, it's a hell of an interesting debate, and it makes going to the comic shop awfully fun.

By the way, were you really nominated for a Harvey Award for Best Letterer (well deserved), but nothing else? That's amazing.

Best,

Adam Beechen
3206 King Street #204
Austin, TX
USA 78705

If recent history is anything to go by, each Harvey nomination translates into a four hundred copy decline in circulation. Congratulations to Todd Klein who won for Best Letterer. I think *Sandman* can afford the four hundred copy drop.

DAVE SIM PERSONAL APPEARANCES 1993

SEPTEMBER UK TOUR '93

LONDON
SEPTEMBER 15
Fantastic Store

SEPTEMBER 17–18
UK Comic Art Convention

ABERDEEN
SEPTEMBER 19
Plan 9

GLASGOW
SEPTEMBER 20
AKA Books

EDINBURGH
SEPTEMBER 21
AKA Books

NEWCASTLE ON-TYNE
SEPTEMBER 22
Forbidden Planet

BIRMINGHAM
SEPTEMBER 24
Fantastic Store

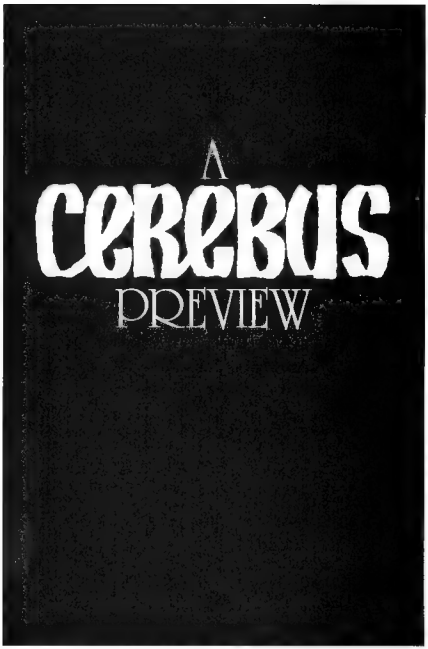
NOTTINGHAM
SEPTEMBER 25
Fantastic Store

SALISBURY
SEPTEMBER 29
Floppy Tongues

OCTOBER 2, 3
DEERBORN, MICHIGAN
Motor City Con.

NOVEMBER 26
COLUMBUS, OHIO
Central City Comics

NOVEMBER 27, 28
COLUMBUS, OHIO
Mid-Ohio Con.



Reproduced here are the last 8 pages of the first issue of Teri S. Wood's *Wandering Star.* And now, in her own words . . .

"(Wow! I'm in the back of *Cerebus*!)

Wandering Star is the story of Casandra Andrews and her life through war and friendship and the loss of innocence. And though it's set in the future and it has its science fiction elements, it's basically a story about people and how life can change them. It's about laughing against the darkness and all the strange things catastrophe can drag out of a person. Anyway, here's hoping you all fall madly in love with *Wandering Star* and run right out to your local comics shop to buy the first three issues. And remember, if you can't find them there, they are available from me, Teri S. Wood, at Pen & Ink Comics, Box 549, El Centro, California, USA 92244-549. Each issue is $2.00 US, or $2.50 Canada, postage paid. Thanks!"

GREG!
YEAH, GREG.
DON'T BE SUCH A GLARKNAH!
TOO LATE.
WHATEVER.
GREG, YOU ARE SUCH A P.I.T.A! THIS IS CASI'S LAST DAY! AND JOEY'S ONLY GOING TO BE HERE TWO MORE WEEKS!
ARE YOU GOING TO RUIN WHAT LITTLE TIME WE HAVE LEFT, WITH FRIENDS WE'VE HAD FOR YEARS, JUST BECAUSE YOU DON'T LIKE WHO ONE OF THEM IS LEAVING?
SHUT UP.
SURE.
OKAY.
I'LL SHUT UP.
FINE.
THANK GOD.
SIGH.
THANK YOU, CASI...
...SO VERY MUCH...
...FOR LEAVING ME WITH SUCH A GROUP OF FINE AND UP-STANDING CITIZENS, THEY ARE A JOY TO WORK WITH. NEVER HAVE I BEEN SO PLEASED.
DAVID.
CONSIDER IT A PREVIEW TO PARENTING.
RIIIGHT.

HEY! GUESS WHAT?
THAT PSYCHIC GUY... YOU KNOW, WHAT'S HIS NAME?
HE'S GOING TO BE AT CASI'S SCHOOL! THE GALACTIC ACADEMY.
WHAT?
YEAH. I HEARD SOMETHING ABOUT THAT.
YEAH, WELL, HE'S AT THE ACADEMY.
THEY HAVE SOME LAB SET-UP THERE AND THEY'RE GONNA STUDY HIM.
PSYCHIC GUY?
GALACTIC ALLIANCE PROPAGANDA.
GREG
...SO HELP ME. IF YOU DON'T BE STILL.
HMPH!
HEY, WASN'T HE ON TELEVISION A WHILE BACK? HE'S LIKE, BLIND OR SOMETHING, AND HE CAN HEAL PEOPLE?
YEAH, THAT'S THE GUY.
BUT NOT HIMSELF. REAL SAD.
AND HE'S AT CASI'S NEW SCHOOL. WONDER-FUN, HUH?
I DON'T KNOW. I THINK THAT STUFF'S KINDA CREEPY.
OH, NO! KAYLIN! IT'S JUST... DIFFERENT.
HEY, CASI! IF YOU SEE HIM, GET ME HIS AUTOGRAPH!
EXCUSE ME...
...WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
OH, CASI!
YOU HAVE TO HAVE HEARD ABOUT HIM!
THAT PSYCHIC GUY!
UM...
CRACKERS!
WHAT WAS HIS NAME...?
AH...
IT'LL COME TO ME.
BUT, ANYWAY!
HE'S GOING TO BE AT YOUR SCHOOL!
MAYBE YOU'LL GET TO SEE HIM!

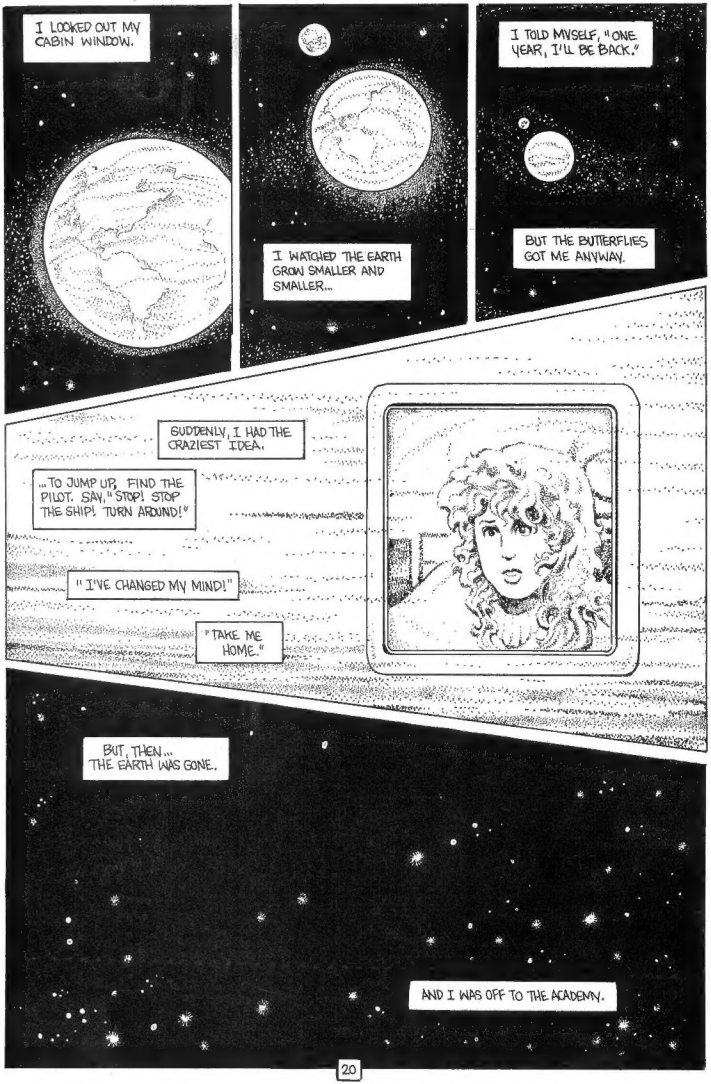
MADISON!
WHAT?
YEAH!
THAT'S IT! THAT'S RIGHT!
MADISON!
WHAT?
THAT'S HIS NAME.
MADISON
THE PSYCHIC GUY.
MADISON, THE PSYCHIC GUY.
SOUNDS LIKE A COMIC BOOK!
BUT CASI!
IT'S TRUE!
I SAW IT ON T.V.!
I'M SURE, MARIE.
AND IF I SEE HIM, I'LL TRY TO GET HIS AUTOGRAPH.

THIS PSYCHIC STUFF IS JUST TOO WEIRD. WHAT IF HE CAN READ YOUR MIND?
I'D HATE THAT.
WE COULD LET HIM READ... GREG'S MIND!
HEY!
OH, NO, MARIE!
I WOULDN'T WISH THAT ON ANYONE!
DAVID!
HEY, CASI.
WHAT SAY I GO TO THE ACADEMY..
...AND YOU STAY HERE AND WATCH THE KIDS?
NO WAY, DAVID, MY LOVE.
I'M RUNNING WHILE THE RUNNING'S GOOD!
HMPH!

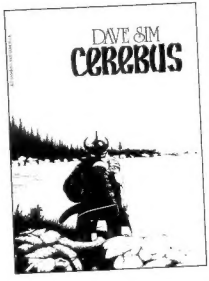
HOW I LOVED THOSE GUNS.
I DIDN'T KNOW IT THEN, BUT, THOSE WERE THE BEST TIMES OF MY LIFE.
I USED TO BE SO DRAMATIC. EVERY LITTLE PROBLEM WAS A MAJOR CATASTROPHE.
I GUESS THAT'S JUST THE WAY IT IS WITH TEEN-AGERS.
IF ONLY I'D KNOWN IT THEN.
HOW PRECIOUS THOSE MOMENTS WERE.
TAKEN THE TIME TO CHERISH THEM.
INSTEAD OF WASTING SO MUCH TIME FUSSING OVER EVERY LITTLE NOTHING.

THE NEXT DAY SEEMED TO COME SO FAST.
BEFORE I KNEW IT, THERE I WAS WITH DAD.
WAITING TO BOARD THE SHUTTLE TO THE ACADEMY.
ARE YOU READY, HONEY?
YEAH.
DO YOU HAVE EVERYTHING YOU NEED?
YEAH.
NERVOUS?
LOTS.

OH, DAD!
I'M GONNA MISS YOU!
NOW REMEMBER, HONEY. IT'S NOT GOING TO BE EASY, BEING THE FIRST CHILD OF AN EARTH OFFICIAL, TO ENTER THE GALACTIC ACADEMY.
I WANT YOU TO BE CAREFUL.
DON'T WORRY, DAD. I'M A FULLY TRAINED JUNIOR OBSERVER SQUAD LEADER.
AND I'M AN ANDREWS.
I'LL CHARM THE PANTS OFF THEM.
Heh.
I'M SURE THAT YOU WILL, HONEY.
THEN I SAID, "GOOD-BYE", TO MY DAD, GOT ON THE SHUTTLE, FOUND MY ROOM, AND TRIED TO PREPARE FOR THE LONG, TWO WEEK TRIP TO THE ACADEMY.
HOW CAN I EXPLAIN HOW I FELT THEN?
I WAS SEVENTEEN. I'D NEVER BEEN OUT OF MY CITYSCAPE, LET ALONE OFF PLANET. AND THERE I WAS, LEAVING EVERYTHING I KNEW BEHIND.


I LOOKED OUT MY CABIN WINDOW.
I WATCHED THE EARTH GROW SMALLER AND SMALLER...
I TOLD MYSELF, "ONE YEAR, I'LL BE BACK."
BUT THE BUTTERFLIES GOT ME ANYWAY.
SUDDENLY, I HAD THE CRAZIEST IDEA.
...TO JUMP UP, FIND THE PILOT. SAY, "STOP! STOP THE SHIP! TURN AROUND!"
"I'VE CHANGED MY MIND!"
"TAKE ME HOME."
BUT, THEN... THE EARTH WAS GONE.
AND I WAS OFF TO THE ACADEMY.

CEREBUS: THE FIRST HALF

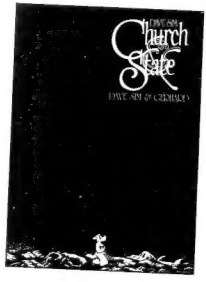


CEREBUS reprints Cerebus 1 to 25
500 pages $25

The Cerebus volume introduces the cast of characters including Elrod the Albino, Red Sophia, Jaka, the Cockroach (later Captain Cockroach with Elrod as Bunky the Albino), Lord Julius, President Weisshaupt and many more.

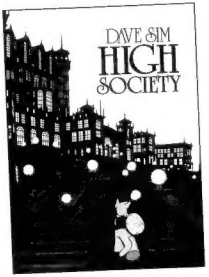
HIGH SOCIETY reprints Cerebus 26 to 50
500 pages $25

Cerebus gets swept up into the world of high power politics in lest and runs for Prime Minister. Introduces Astoria, Filgate, Blakely, the Regency Elf, Dirty Fleagle and his brother Dirty Drew McGrew, Duke Leonardi. The Roach becomes Moon Roach and Sergeant Preston of the Royal Mounted lestan police.



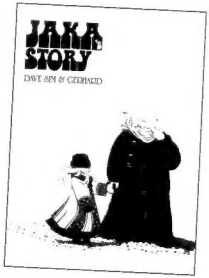
CHURCH & STATE Vol. I & II
reprints Cerebus 52 to 111
1200 pages $30 ea.

One of the longest single stories in the history of comics. Manipulated by President Weisshaupt, Cerebus finds himself married and then finds himself as Pope of the Eastern Church! Introduces Mrs. Henrot-Gutch (Cerebus' mother-in-law), Boobah, Bear, Bishop Powers, Bishop Posey, Mick and Keef and many more. The Roach becomes Wolveroach and the Secret Sacred Wars Roach. Also, in volume II, is the Flaming Carrot cross-over.



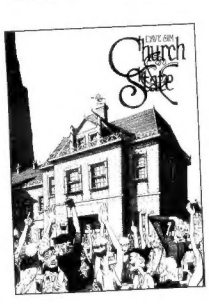
JAKA'S STORY reprints Cerebus 114 to 136
500 pages $25

Cerebus returns to find his life in ruins and ends up as a houseguest of the love of his life, Jaka, and her new husband Rick. Introduces Oscar the poet, Pud, the tavern-owner, and Mrs. Thatcher.



MELMOTH reprints Cerebus 139 to 150
250 pages $17

Cerebus, mistakenly believing that Jaka is dead, takes up residence in Dino's Cafe, clutching Jaka's childhood doll, Missy and his sword. The other half of the story is a faithful retelling of the last days of Oscar Wilde. The Roach becomes normalroach. Introduces Doris, Dino, Janice, Robbie and Reggie. Cameo appearances by Mick and Keef.

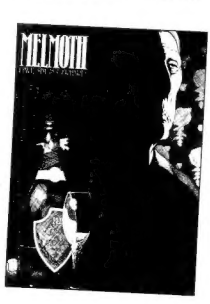


THE SECOND HALF BEGINS IN 1993:

FLIGHT reprinting Cerebus 151 to 162
250 pages ($17)

and

CEREBUS NUMBER ZERO
(reprinting the 'in-between' stories from Cerebus 51, 112/113 and 137-138) ($2.25)



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LONDON
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